

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF DEER

Everyone likes to watch deer, except when they are in your garden or in the path of your car. Therefore, we need to ensure that we are not contributing to the detriment of our local deer population.

The deer population has been growing each year yet their natural habitat has been shrinking due to continued urban development. That loss of habitat is forcing deer to encroach into our residential areas where they can find a vast assortment of enticing vegetation.

We should not deliberately feed the deer as this contributes to this encroachment. Their continued residential presence may change their status from that of a nuisance (for those with gardens and prized landscapes) to that of a hazard (for all drivers on our roads).

The best deterrent for a garden is a fence. Repellants like Liquid Fence™ and other sprays will also help but need to be continually applied. Planting trees and shrubs that are deer resistant will also facilitate this goal. Local garden centers can identify the varieties that deer do not prefer.

Drivers must be cautious on any of our city streets that have tree lines close to the road. Extra caution is required at dawn and dusk. Deer usually travel in groups so if you see one, there should be more in trail.

As our deer population continues to grow and their habitat continues to shrink, the city will have to keep an eye on this situation. Herd management may have to be implemented at some point – a contentious action that many cities are faced with. But for now, we need to drive alertly and ensure that we are not enticing deer to be more frequent “residential” visitors.